

Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 182300Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0067

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

RUESAVVXAMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 1257

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2334

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, NU

SUBJECT: VISIT TO MANAGUA BY AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

1. ON FRIDAY, MAY 14, MICHAEL MCCLINTOCK OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND KURT MADLENER OF THE MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE CALLED AT THEIR REQUEST AT THE EMBASSY TO DISCUSS THEIR VISIT TO NICARAGUA.

2. THEY SAID THEY HAD BEEN RECEIVED BY MR. MORA, MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT, WHO HAD NOT BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING IN HIS RESPONSES TO THEIR QUESTIONS. ACCORDING TO THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL RPPRESENTATIVES, MR. MORA REPEATEDLY CITED THE CUBAN THREAT TO NICARAGUA IN RESPONSE TO NEARLY ALL OF THEIR QUESTIONS. THEY SAID THEY HAD EXPLAINED TO MR. MORA THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO CONTACT GOVERNMENTS SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE ACTING ONLY ON ONE-SIDED REPORTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. THEY SAID THEY WERE NOT INTERESTED IN PROPAGANDA BUT ONLY IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND THEREFORE WISHED TO HEAR BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY. THEY INDICATED THAT ALTHOUGH THEY HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED IN GUATEMALA THE GOVERNMENT THERE WAS NO MORE FORTHCOMING THAN THE GOVERNMENT HERE.

3. THEY HAD ASKED MORA FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT THE PRISONS AND HAD BEEN TOLD THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO GER PERMISSION. HE SAID HE WOULD
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LET THEM KNOW, WHICH HE DID NOT DO. THEY THEN CALLED ON MORA

AGAIN AND LEFT WITH HIM A LIST OF FIVE NAMES OF SPECIFIC PRISONERS THEY WISHED TO INTERVIEW. AGAIN THEY WERE TOLD THAT PERMISSION WOULD HAVE TO BE OBTAINED BUT RECEIVED NO FURTHER REPLY. OTHER GOVERNMENT LEADERS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGRESS, CORNELIO HUECK, REFUSED TO SEE THEM. THEY HAD APPARENTLY TALKED WITH SOME LOWER-RANKING JUDGES, LAWYERS AND SOME INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS WHO HAD COMPLAINTS OF CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

4. THEIR CONCERN WITH THE STATE OF SEIGE IN NICARAGUA WAS NOT WITH ITS IMPOSITION, FOLLOWING THE LOS ROBLES ATTACK OF DECEMBER 1978; BUT RATHER ON ITS CONTINUATION SOME 18 MONTHS AFTER THE ATTACK. THEY EXPRESSED THEIR BELIEF THAT AFTER CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS BEGIN IN JUNE, SOMOZA MIGHT LIFT THE STAGE OF SEIGE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PURPOSES. WE HAVE NO CONFIRMATION OF THIS BUT THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL RECENT INDICATIONS BY SOMOZA THAT HE WOULD LIKE AT LEAST TO LIFT PRESS CENSORSHIP.

5. AMONGST THE ALLEGATIONS THEY RELATED TO THE EMBASSY OFFICER WERE THE FOLLOWING:

THE GUARDIA NACIONAL TAKES CAMPESINOS UP IN A HELICOPTER AND DROPS THEM. WHEN THE EMBASSY OFFICER INDICATED A LACK OF CREDIBILITY FOR SUCH HIGHLY VISIBLE AND SENSELESS TYPE OF KILLING AND POINTED OUT THE SCARCITY OF HELICOPTERS IN NICARAGUA, MCCLINTOCK SAID THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR THE AMERICAN FORCES FROM PANAMA TO PROVIDE HELICOPTERS. THE EMBASSY OFFICER COMPLETELY REJECTED THEIR ALLEGATION OF U.S. PARTICIPATION.

6. WHEN ASKED WHY THE CAMPESINOS WERE ALLEGEDLY BEING DROPPED FROM HELICOPTERS OR OTHERWISE CAUSED TO DISAPPEAR, THE VISITORS SAID THAT THE MILITARY WANTED TO TAKE THEIR LAND. EVEN AFTER EXTENSIVE DISCUSSION OF THE ILLOGICAL ALLEGATION, THE VISITORS SEEMED CONVINCED THAT THE GN WAS KILLING CAMPESINOS TO ACQUIRE THEIR LAND.

7. THE EMBASSY OFFICER EXPLAINED THAT NICARAGUA WAS A FRIENDLY, COOPERATIVE COUNTRY. THEY SUPPORTED US IN INTERNATIONAL FORA, THEY ACCORDED THE MISSION EVERY DIPLOMATIC PRIVILEGE AND IMMUNITY, THEY

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WERE MOST RESPECTIVE TO U.S. DELEGATIONS, THEY PERMITTED THE MISSION TO TREAT WITH THE OPPOSITION, THEY PROVIDED A WELCOME TO AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN AND WENT TO GREAT LENGTHS TO PROTECT EMBASSY PERSONNEL. THE EMBASSY HAS NEVER FAILED TO IMPRESS UPON THE GON AND ESPECIALLY UPON ITS AMERICAN-EDUCATED PRESIDENT, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS BY THE GON, BUT THAT THERE ARE LIMITED TO THE EMBASSY'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THE CONDUCT OF THE MILITARY IN A COUNTRY WHICH HAS AN ACTIVE INSURGENCY WHICH IS

APPARENTLY SUPPORTED FROM OUTSIDE THE BORDERS OF THE COUNTRY (CUBA). MR. MADLENER AGREED BOTH THAT NICARAGUA MUST BE A VALUABLE ALLY TO THE U.S. AND THAT THE EMBASSY HAD A LIMITED CAPACITY TO MAKE ANOTHER GOVERNMENT CHANGE ITS MANNER OF GOVERNING. HE CITED ESPECIALLY JUDICIAL CORRUPTION AND MILITARY EXTORTION, BUT HE FELT THAT THE APPLICATION OF PRESSURE VY VARIOUS COUNTRIES AND BY ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MIGHT MAKE COUNTRIES LIKE NICARAGUA GIVE UP ONE OR ANOTHER OF THEIR CENSURABLE PRACTICES.

8. COMMENT: IT WAS SURPRISING AND DISTURBING TO NOTE THE APPARENT CREDIBILITY WHICH THE AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES GAVE TO SUCH UNSUBSTANTIATED AND EXTREME ALLEGATIONS AS THE USE OF HELICOPTERS FOR THE DROPPING OF CAMPESINOS. THEY SHOWED CONSIDERABLE IMMATURITY IN THEIR JUDGMENTS. WE TEND TO THINK THAT THE GON DID ITSELF A DISSERVICE, SINCE IT HAS LITTLE TO HIDE, IN NOT BEING MORE FORTHCOMING WITH AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES. THEBERGE

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